

This Act extends to seafarers the same basic reemployment rights that apply to reserve members of our Armed Forces in time of war or national emergency. American merchant mariners have always responded to the call in times of crisis, and they deserve the assurance that their peacetime jobs will be there when they return.

The Maritime Security Act will protect American jobs and maintain a U.S. presence in international maritime trade, ensuring that vital imports and exports are delivered in both peace-

time and wartime. The Act reaffirms our Nation's resolve to maintain a strong U.S.-flag presence on the high seas for our continued national security and economic growth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 8, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 1350, approved October 8, was assigned Public Law No. 104-239.

Message on the Observance of Polish American Heritage Month *October 8, 1996*

Warm greetings to everyone observing Polish American Heritage Month.

Many Americans proudly trace their roots to Poland, a land whose rich and colorful past is rivaled only by the bright promise of its future. This month, as we celebrate the many contributions that Americans of Polish heritage have made to our nation's history and culture, we also reaffirm the strong and friendly ties between the United States and Poland.

Before America became a nation, Poles came to these shores in search of liberty and opportunity, and their descendants have remained at the forefront of efforts to keep America free, strong, and prosperous. This year we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of the great Polish hero Tadeusz Kosciuszko, who helped secure the independence of our fledgling republic during the Revolutionary War. Since that time, millions of other men and women of Polish descent have invested their hopes in America's bold experiment in self-government and, inspired by faith in God and a devotion to demo-

cratic ideals, have worked hard to ensure its success.

The deep cultural and familial ties between the peoples of the United States and Poland have been strengthened by our shared values and aspirations. For generations, Poles have demonstrated the same reverence for individual rights and dignity that infuses our own system of government. The United States supports Poland's democratic transition and her people's efforts to establish a pluralistic society and a free market economy. Poland and the United States are building a new security for the twenty-first century, working together to prepare for NATO's enlargement in an undivided Europe.

As we observe Polish American Heritage Month, I join all Americans in thanking our fellow citizens of Polish descent for their countless contributions to the strength and quality of our national life. Best wishes to all for a memorable celebration.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks on Signing the Federal Aviation Reauthorization Act of 1996 *October 9, 1996*

Thank you, Doug Smith, for your very moving remarks, for your recognition of the contributions of others, and for your own constant, brave efforts to help this day come to pass. And I

thank all the family members who are here for your efforts to go beyond your own personal suffering to make something positive happen for our country in the future. Thank you, Madam